

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the Abstract as follows:

A system and method for securing a welding electrode to a welding torch. The system ~~comprises~~ includes a collet body having a first portion that compresses an end of a collet against a welding electrode as the collet is urged against the first portion. The collet body also ~~comprises~~ includes an inner cylindrical portion that receives the compressed end of the collet and prevents the collet from expanding, thereby maintaining the collet compressed against the welding electrode. The method ~~comprises~~ includes urging the collet against the first portion of the collet body to compress the end portion of the collet against the welding electrode. The method also ~~comprises~~ includes urging the collet further into the collet body to dispose the end portion of the collet into the inner cylindrical portion of the collet body to prevent the end portion of the collet from expanding.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 14 as follows:

Referring generally to Figure 3, an embodiment of a collet body 42 is illustrated. As noted above, the collet body 42 and the collet 40 cooperate to secure a welding electrode 24 to the welding torch 32. The dimensions of a collet 40 and a collet body 42 are coordinated to facilitate their cooperation in securing the welding electrode 24 to the welding torch 32. ~~In addition, portions of the passageway 50 are designed to enable gas to flow through the collet body 42 around the welding electrode 24.~~

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 4 as follows:

In this view, the collet 40 would be inserted into the collet body 42 from the right to the left. The first tapered surface 70 of the passageway 66 compresses the end of the collet onto the welding electrode as the collet 40 is urged against the first tapered surface. As the backcap is further threaded onto the welding torch, the collet 40 is urged into the second cylindrical surface 72 of the passageway 66. The second cylindrical surface 72

prevents the compressed end of the collet from expanding, which would result in the release of the electrode. In addition, the second cylindrical surface 72 prevents the collet 40 from expanding, and thereby loosening the electrode, due to temperature changes. Furthermore, the second cylindrical surface 72 centers the collet 40 and electrode 24 within the passageway 66. As the backcap is threaded still further onto the welding torch, the collet 40 is urged against the second tapered surface 74, which provides a further compressive force on the collet 40. The third cylindrical surface 76 provides a path for the electrode 24. The end of the collet body 42 has a tapered surface 77 to guide an electrode into the collet body ~~40~~ 42.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 14 as follows:

Referring generally to Figure 7, an alternative embodiment of a collet body 100 is illustrated. The illustrated embodiment of a collet body 100 is longer than the previously disclosed embodiment of a collet body 42. The collet body 100 has a passageway 102 to enable a welding electrode to extend through the collet body 100. The shape of the passageway 102 varies as it extends through the collet body 100. In the illustrated embodiment, the passageway ~~400~~ 102 has a first cylindrical surface 104 and a shoulder 106 extending around the passageway ~~400~~ 102. The shoulder 106 compresses a collet as the collet is urged against the shoulder 106. The collet body 100 also has a second cylindrical surface 108 that maintains the collet compressed. The second cylindrical surface also centers the collet within the collet body 100. From there, the passageway ~~400~~ 102 leads to a tapered surface 110 that limits movement of the collet, and assists in the compression of the collet. The collet body 100 also has a third cylindrical surface 112 to enable an electrode to extend through the collet body 100. The end of the collet body 100 has a tapered surface 114 to guide an electrode into the collet body ~~400~~ 100.